

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (original): A protein having an endoglucanase activity and derived from a microorganism belonging to genus Staphylotrichum.

2. (original): The protein according to claim 1, having

(A) an encoglucanase activity, and

(B) the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 at the N-terminus thereof.

3. (original): The protein according to claim 2, having

(A) an encoglucanase activity,

(B) the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 at the N-terminus thereof, and

(C) an average molecular weight of 49 kD, determined by a sodium dodecyl sulfate-polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis.

4. (original): The protein according to claim 2, having

(A) an encoglucanase activity,

(B) the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 at the N-terminus thereof, and

(C) an average molecular weight of 45 kD, determined by a sodium dodecyl sulfate-polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis.

5. (currently amended): The protein according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 4~~, derived from Staphylotrichum coccosporum.

6. (original): A protein selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) a protein comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 3,
- (b) a modified protein comprising an amino acid sequence in which one or plural amino acids are deleted, substituted, inserted, or added in the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 3, and having an endoglucanase activity, and
- (c) a homologous protein comprising an amino acid sequence having at least an 85% homology with that of SEQ ID NO: 3, and having an endoglucanase activity.

7. (currently amended): A polynucleotide encoding the protein according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 6~~.

8. (original): A polynucleotide selected from the group consisting of:

- (i) a polynucleotide comprising the nucleotide sequence consisting of nucleotides 64-948 of SEQ ID NO: 2,

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(ii) a polynucleotide comprising a nucleotide sequence in which one or plural nucleotides are deleted, substituted, inserted, or added in the nucleotide sequence consisting of nucleotides 64-948 of SEQ ID NO: 2, and encoding a protein having an endoglucanase activity, and

(iii) a polynucleotide hybridizing under stringent conditions to a polynucleotide consisting of the nucleotide sequence consisting of nucleotides 64-948 of SEQ ID NO: 2, and encoding a protein having an endoglucanase activity.

9. (currently amended): An expression vector comprising the polynucleotide according to claim 7-~~or 8~~.

10. (original): A host cell transformed with the expression vector according to claim 9.

11. (original): The host cell according to claim 10, wherein the host is a yeast or a filamentous fungus.

12. (original): The host cell according to claim 11, wherein the yeast is a microorganism belonging to genus Saccharomyces, Hansenula, or Pichia.

13. (original): The host cell according to claim 11, wherein the filamentous fungus is a microorganism belonging to genus Humicola, Trichoderma, Staphylotrichum, Aspergillus, Fusarium, or Acremonium.

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14. (original): The host cell according to claim 13, the filamentous fungus is Humicola insolens or Trichoderma viride.

15. (currently amended): A process for producing the protein according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 6~~, comprising the steps of:
cultivating a host cell transformed with an expression vector comprising a polynucleotide encoding the protein according to claim 1 ~~the host cells according to any one of claims 10 to 14~~,
and
collecting the protein from the host cells or a culture obtained by the cultivation.

16. (original): A protein produced by the process according to claim 15.

17. (currently amended): A cellulase preparation comprising the protein according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 6 and 16~~.

18. (currently amended): A detergent composition comprising the protein according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 6 and 16 or the cellulase preparation according to claim 17~~.

19. (currently amended): A method of treating a cellulose-containing fabric, comprising the step of bringing the cellulose-containing fabric into contact with the protein according to claim 1 ~~any~~

~~one of claims 1 to 6 and 16, the cellulase preparation according to claim 17, or the detergent composition according to claim 18.~~

20. (currently amended): A method of reducing fuzzing of a cellulose-containing fabric or reducing a rate of the formation of fuzz, comprising the step of bringing the cellulose-containing fabric into contact with the protein according to claim 1, ~~any one of claims 1 to 6 and 16, the cellulase preparation according to claim 17, or the detergent composition according to claim 18.~~

21. (currently amended): A method of reducing weight to improve the touch feel and appearance of a cellulose-containing fabric, comprising the step of bringing the cellulose-containing fabric into contact with the protein according to claim 1, ~~any one of claims 1 to 6 and 16, the cellulase preparation according to claim 17, or the detergent composition according to claim 18.~~

22. (currently amended): A method of color clarification of a colored cellulose-containing fabric, comprising the step of bringing the colored cellulose-containing fabric into contact with the protein according to claim 1, ~~any one of claims 1 to 6 and 16, the cellulase preparation according to claim 17, or the detergent composition according to claim 18.~~

23. (currently amended): A method of providing a localized color change to a colored cellulose-containing fabric, comprising the step of bringing the colored cellulose-containing fabric into

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contact with the protein according to claim 1, ~~any one of claims 1 to 6 and 16, the cellulase preparation according to claim 17, or the detergent composition according to claim 18.~~

24. (currently amended): A method of reducing stiffness of a cellulose-containing fabric or reducing a rate of the formation of stiffness, comprising the step of bringing the cellulose-containing fabric into contact with the protein according to claim 1, ~~any one of claims 1 to 6 and 16, the cellulase preparation according to claim 17, or the detergent composition according to claim 18.~~

25. (currently amended): The method according to claim 19, ~~any one of claims 19 to 24,~~ wherein the treatment of the fabric is carried out by soaking, washing, or rinsing the fabric.

26. (currently amended): A method of deinking waste paper, comprising the step of treating the waste paper with the protein according to claim 1, ~~any one of claims 1 to 6 and 16 or the cellulase preparation according to claim 17 together with a deinking agent.~~

27. (currently amended): A method of improving a water freeness of paper pulp, comprising the step of treating the paper pulp with the protein according to claim 1, ~~any one of claims 1 to 6 and 16 or the cellulase preparation according to claim 17.~~

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28. (currently amended): A method of improving a digestibility of animal feed, comprising the step of treating a cellulose-containing fabric with the protein according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 6 and 16 or the cellulase preparation according to claim 17.~~